



Questions and Answers: The Cal Grant Entitlement High School Graduation Confirmation Process

Why is high school graduation confirmation necessary?

Answer: In response to state audit findings in 2006, the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) agreed to require that new Cal Grant Entitlement participants self-certify their high school graduation for the 2007-08 school year. For the 2008-09 academic year, the Commission directed staff to develop an electronic certification system to gather the required confirmation of high school graduation. Since the confirmation must be made after the high school graduation, for the majority of new Cal Grant Entitlement participants no confirmations could be entered until May or June of this year.

Doesn't this duplicate the student's statement on the FAFSA that they will be a high school graduate? What about the graduation date entered on the GPA Verification?

Answer: No. The required certification must be a post-graduation certification. The FAFSA application question and the date on the GPA Verification are only pre-graduation estimates. The post-graduation confirmation more clearly establishes the student's eligibility based on the Cal Grant Entitlement high school graduation requirement.

Are high schools required to participate in this process?

Answer: No. There is no State mandate and no funding is being provided to high schools to offset any work completed to perform the graduation certification. The Commission has established a process that is very straightforward and easy for high schools to complete. The actual time spent by schools to confirm their high school rosters should not exceed a few minutes.

How is graduation confirmation performed?

Answer: High schools with WebGrants access will log into WebGrants and view a list of new Cal Grant Entitlement participants for whom the high school certified GPAs. Of those students on the list, the school will indicate which awardees **have not** graduated. This exception process will be the least difficult to complete since the majority of Cal Grant Entitlement participants will have completed their high school graduation requirements.

What if the high school cannot or does not confirm the student's graduation status?

Answer: The student will have other opportunities to have high school graduation confirmed. If the high school cannot provide the information, the student's college will be able to provide the confirmation. Also, the student will be able to self-confirm, either on-line or by paper. Since some students may not have on-line access, Commission staff will be able to update a student's status upon receipt of confirmation documents sent from various approved sources. Any student who has not had his or her high school graduation confirmed will not receive Cal Grant payment.

How does a student confirm their graduation status?

Answer: The student will establish a WebGrants for Students account at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov>. Once logged in, the student will receive instructions on confirming their graduation status if another source has not already confirmed their high school graduation.

How long will students have to confirm their high school graduation?

Answer: Students will be able to confirm their high school graduation through January 2009. No Cal Grant payments will be made until high school graduation is confirmed. The Commission anticipates communicating through a series of email notifications to remind students to confirm their graduation status so that they do not lose their Cal Grant award.

Award offers will be withdrawn if high school graduation has not been confirmed by January 2009. Withdrawal at that time will allow students time to receive notice and apply again for the 2009-10 award year.

When a school certifies that a student has not graduated, does it mean that the student absolutely cannot receive any Cal Grant payments?

Answer: No. State law allows new Cal Grant Entitlement participants until December 31 of the award year to complete their high school graduation. If the student does graduate by December 31 of the award year, the student can submit proof of their graduation to the Commission and begin receiving payments with the next school term.

I have a student who did not graduate but completed high school by passing the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE)? May I certify that the student is a high school graduate?

Answer: Yes. However, you must have authoritative documentation that shows the student did pass the CHSPE.

Could a student pass the GED to complete their high school requirements?

Answer: Yes. Since passing the GED is the legal equivalent of graduating high school, this would be acceptable to confirm eligibility for a Cal Grant Entitlement award. Students would access WebGrants for Students and confirm their graduation (or the equivalent) status.